

Congresswoman NYDIA M. VELÁZQUEZ

Representing New York's 12th Congressional District

Ranking Democratic Member, House Small Business Committee



Velázquez Speaks Out Against FY 2004 Budget

Budget cuts billions in programs that are important to New Yorkers

At a recent press conference, Congresswoman Velázquez spoke out against the federal budget for 2004. The Republican backed budget slashed important domestic programs in New York by almost \$19 billion over the next decade.

"The budget is all about priorities, which are sadly misplaced in this case," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "President Bush and many Republicans in Congress support a \$726 billion tax cut that benefits the wealthiest 1% of Americans. At the same time they cut billions in New York services and benefits aimed at low-income families. It is an outrage that tax cuts for the wealthy will come at the expense of important programs to help working families."

The budget calls for \$12.7 billion in cuts over 10 years to the Medicaid and the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). Medicaid helps countless New York City residents afford health care coverage.

The budget also cuts over \$4 million from Child Nutrition programs and more than \$1 billion has been cut over the next 10 years in the New York food stamp program.



Congresswoman Velázquez and her colleagues speak out against the cuts in the federal budget for 2004.

"This is just the tip of the iceberg," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "There were more than 25 programs to aid small businesses that were cut or terminated, as well as those that protect our environment and help our veterans."

Push for \$1.25 Million in Funding

Velázquez asks for funding of local transportation project

Congresswoman Velázquez requested funding for the East River Park Entrance and Greenway Extension Project in the amount of \$1.25 million. The money would support the design and construction of a greenway segment and a new entrance to the waterfront park on Manhattan's Lower East Side.

The project would do this by redeveloping a dangerous one-way road into a two-way, multi-user path. It would not only form part of New York City's 350-mile Greenway System, but it would also restore public access to the East River. The greenway will extend south of the East River Park, connecting it with the Manhattan waterfront greenway in the north and the New York City Economic Development Corporation's greenway to the south.

By enhancing the community's economic viability,

the greenway would continue to provide benefits for commuting and recreation with open space, both for the local community and the region as a whole.

"I am very hopeful that this project, totaling \$1.25 million, will be funded to improve traffic conditions and the quality of life of residents in my district," Congresswoman Velázquez said. "The safety and viability of our transportation systems is a determinant for the safety and viability of our communities."

The funding was requested through the Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA-21), a congressional bill that seeks to address infrastructure issues, including growing traffic congestion, in an environmentally-sound manner.

Velázquez Speaks on Women and Poverty

During the recent Women Fighting Poverty Conference held at Union Square, Congresswoman Velázquez spoke about the growing problem of American women facing poverty. She discussed programs aimed at fighting poverty that have been cut by the 2004 federal budget.

“The latest Bush budget is detrimental to many programs that are so important to me and my district - health care, job training, education, child care, housing and welfare,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “All these issues play a role in helping to lift women out of poverty and give them the tools they need to change their lives.”

The theme of this year’s conference was “Battling Back Against Cutting Back.”

“We are the richest, most powerful nation in the world, but poverty runs rampant here,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “What can we do about it? There are federal programs to help our most vulnerable families and individuals. But I am sad to say that to pay for the war in Iraq and a \$726 billion tax cut, the President is quickly



Congresswoman Velázquez speaks at the Women Fighting Poverty Conference.

chipping away at the social safety net by cutting or eliminating important anti-poverty programs.”

“Hispanic Business” Woman of the Year

Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez received the inaugural Hispanic Business Magazine Woman of the Year award and was recognized at a special awards luncheon.

“I am very honored to receive this award,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “One of my top priorities in Congress is to ensure that the voice of small business, including minority-owned businesses, is heard. They are the backbone of the American economy, and women, especially Latinas, are opening businesses in record numbers today. There is still much work to be done, but I know that they are our future and I will continue to fight for them.”

Velázquez was recognized for her national influence in both the political and business sectors and for her longtime support of minority enterprise and economic development. The luncheon was held to celebrate the achievements of Velázquez and the other women who make up the magazine’s “80 Elite Hispanic Women” list for 2003.



Congresswoman Velázquez speaks at the Hispanic Business Woman of the Year awards luncheon.

TOP Program Will Help Bridge Digital Divide

The Technology Opportunities Program (TOP) is one of the only federal programs solely dedicated to providing assistance to libraries, community centers, after-school programs, and other local organizations by offering underserved populations access to information technology and training. TOP is a highly competitive grant program funded through the National Telecommunications and Information Administration at the Department of Commerce.

Funding for TOP was eliminated in President Bush’s latest budget. Congresswoman Velázquez is working to get this money restored.

“TOP is critical to community development, and is an important investment in our nation’s future economic prosperity,” Congresswoman Velázquez said. “Technology literacy has become a basic life skill that is vital to educational, economic, social and civic achievement. TOP provides underserved populations with valuable access to information technology and training. Many residents in my district benefit from this program and I hope that my request for funding will be met.”

The program is responsible for extending and improving the delivery of valuable services and opportunities to all Americans. Between 1995 and 2002, almost \$13 million was awarded to New York through the TOP program.

Grants Awarded to Our Community

New York University..... \$289,799 Funding for genetics and developmental biology research	Riverside Research Institute.....\$140,005 Funding for low-income energy assistance funds
New York University.....\$422,292 Funding for diabetes, endocrinology and metabolic research	Department of Commerce.....\$729,566 Funding for public telecommunications facilities program
New York University.....\$76,500 Funding for population research	New York City Radio.....\$729,566 Funding for public telecommunications facilities program